

DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

Security Committee

SECOM-D-168/81

25 June 1981

MEMORANDUM FOR: SECOM Members

FROM:

Chairman

SUBJECT: Update of "A Study of Harassments and Provocations"

1. Members agreed at the 20 May 1981 meeting that it would be desirable to update the July 1978 SECOM study on harassments and provocations (SECOM-D-342). The object is to ensure that the Community has data reflecting recent experience by Americans abroad which can be used effectively in enhancing defensive security briefings for others about to travel or be assigned to countries in which there is a risk of harassments and provocations.

2. Cases presented for this purpose should include detailed, objective data describing all pertinent factors from which "lessons learned" can be derived. It would be helpful if the data provided included such information as the kinds of personal data foreign countries require on visa applications, and explicit descriptions of conduct abroad (e.g., contact with persons or groups deemed "unreliable" by host countries), which might have triggered provocations and harassments. It would also be helpful if inputs addressed geographic areas of concern (e.g., USSR, Eastern European Warsaw Pact countries, the Middle East), and individual countries in such areas which measurably deviate from the "norm" on provocations and harassments. If there are any areas or countries of previous concern which have been relatively free from incidents in recent years, comments assessing the change and its likely permanence would be useful.

3. Addressees are requested to provide data for this update by 23 October 1981. While those departments and agencies which maintain facilities abroad are most likely to have material to contribute, comments and suggestions from all would be welcome.

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WESTERN EUROPE/USSR/OTHER COMMUNIST COUNTRIES

THREAT TO TRAVELERS TO COMMUNIST COUNTRIES (U)

(U) One of the main recruiting techniques used by the hostile intelligence services against U.S. travelers to the USSR and other communist countries is the harassment or entrapment of the visitor from the West so that he (or she) can be coerced into performing espionage for the communist host country. The typical scenario begins with the U.S. traveler being confronted with a charge of violation of the communist country's laws. The violation may be real, e.g., blackmarketing, illegal currency exchange, sexual indiscretion, etc., or it may be fabricated, such as allegations that he has classified documents in his luggage or technical errors in his travel documents.

(U) In any event, the visitor is detained and escorted to some security facility, such as a police station. There, he is turned over to individuals who may claim to be policemen or officials investigating the alleged offense. Usually, the traveler is told he has committed a serious violation and may even face a prison sentence. At the least, the visitor is warned the incident may ruin his professional or personal life. After some preliminary questioning, the "officials" (in reality, officers of the country's intelligence service) will inform the traveler that there may be a way out of the predicament if he is willing to provide the communist country with "a little assistance." If the visitor assents, an espionage pitch may then be made.

(U) The foregoing scenario has been used repeatedly with varying degrees of subtlety and sophistication. Although lacking the advantages of the time-consuming social cultivation and vetting process, this method nevertheless remains a technique for successful agent recruitments. Summarized in the paragraphs below are five harassment/entrapment attempts made against USAF personnel and reported to AFOSI by these personnel in accordance with AFR 205-57.

● (U) The wife of a USAF officer took part in a tour of the Soviet Union arranged by the Officers' Wives Club at the base where her husband was stationed. Her husband held a sensitive position with an organization performing high-level functions. Upon her arrival in the USSR, the woman was told there was a problem with her passport and visa. She was separated from her tour group and questioned by alleged Soviet Border Guard personnel concerning her husband's official duties. The woman and her luggage were physically searched and her wallet, with ID documents and photographs of her husband, was confiscated and remained out of her hands for several hours. At first denied permission to contact the U.S. Embassy, the USAF wife was finally allowed to make a call but found the phone system out of order. She eventually succeeded in contacting a U.S.



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Embassy representative, and was released after almost a full day after her initial detention. Throughout the tour, she was followed constantly and her luggage occasionally searched openly. The group's Inturist Guide tried, unsuccessfully, to isolate her from her companions, presumably to facilitate an approach by Soviet intelligence personnel. On one occasion, she was asked by a Russian to sell him a U.S. passport, a tactic probably meant to entrap her into a violation of local laws.

● (U) A USAF airman toured the Soviet Union as part of a group in which he was the only U.S. military member. Upon arrival at the Kiev airport, his passport was taken from him and held by officials for approximately 30 minutes. All other tour group members were processed immediately. The airman's visa application had contained his military address and this may have alerted the Soviets. While later touring apart from the group, the airman was approached by a Soviet male who solicited an illegal exchange of dollars for rubles. The airman refused. He suspected then, and on subsequent occasions during the tour, that he was kept under surveillance.

● (U) Two USAF officers on a tour of the Soviet Union noted that surveillances were occasionally conducted on them during local sightseeing trips. Both were frequently approached by Soviets seeking--illegally--either to buy American clothing (jeans) or to exchange rubles for dollars. Prior to departure, one officer noted that his luggage had been searched while it was in the possession of the hotel porters and a small packet of photographic slides of various public buildings in the Soviet Union had been inserted into his bag. At the airport, a very similar bag belonging to the other USAF officer on the tour was thoroughly searched and its owner harassed at some length. It was speculated that the slides were placed in the one officer's bag in order to confront him with an accusation that he was smuggling "classified" material out of the USSR.

● (U) Five wives of high-ranking USAF officers were on a tour in East Berlin when they were confronted at a cafe by a German female who, speaking excellent English, sought to exchange East German marks for West German marks. The German directed her request toward the wife of a USAF general officer and was persistent in her effort to persuade the general's wife to make the exchange. All of the women refused and they later stated they believed it was more than coincidence that they had been approached by a German female who was seated near them, spoke



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excellent English and directed her solicitations toward the general's wife. This incident followed by one week the defection of an East German employee of the U.S. Embassy in East Berlin. The incident may have represented a direct provocation and an attempt to embarrass the U.S. by having the wife of a high-ranking USAF officer arrested for breaking local laws.

● (U) A USAF officer traveling in the capital of an East European country checked into his hotel and went out for dinner. He knew no one in the country and made no acquaintances during dinner or at the hotel. However, late that night he was awakened by a phone call from a female who, in English, offered to come to the officer's room. She was persistent but did not explain how she knew of his presence in that hotel. The officer refused and immediately called the U.S. Embassy to report the incident. The hotel was known to be used by the intelligence service of the country to entice U.S. male guests with sexual offers and blackmailing them with photographic evidence of their misadventures.

(U) In terms of comparative cost, the fledgling tourist industry in the Soviet Union and other Communist countries is able to tempt vacationers from the West with attractively priced tour packages. The Communist nations, although somewhat late to the realization that tourism serves as an excellent source of economic stimulation and foreign exchange, are now aggressively subsidizing and promoting their tourist industries. The Soviet Union, largely as part of its preparation for the 1980 Summer Olympics in Moscow, has been especially anxious to lure travelers from the West. Each year, several hundred USAF personnel and their dependents are among visitors to the USSR and other Communist countries. Many of these tourists are from countries of Western Europe where local off-base travel agencies promote low-cost tour packages aimed at the U.S. military community.

(U) While USAF personnel should not assume that circumstances similar to the examples cited above are necessarily encountered by every visitor to the USSR or other communist countries, it is important to remember that incidents of harassment/entrapment can happen and that when they do, the experience can be intimidating, even though the traveler has been briefed. Americans are subject to the laws of the country in which they are visitors and American perceptions of individual rights and due process do not necessarily apply. USAF personnel should remember that no matter how ominous-sounding the threat, it is rarely in the political interests of the communist country to take harsh action against a visitor for either minor infractions or fabricated violations. Most of these situations are contrived in order to provide an opportunity for an



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espionage approach by the hostile service. Should a USAF member actually find himself (or herself) so approached, he (or she) should firmly refuse to cooperate and report the entire incident, in detail, as soon as he returns to his unit.